Talks on Trade between India and China

104. SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Will the the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the salient details of the outcome of the talks held during his visit to China in January, 2008 alongwith Hon'ble Prime Minister on mutual trade agreement between India and China;

(b) whether it is a fact that the accompanying Indian business delegation to the entourage in its deliberation highlighted various artificial trade barriers and unfavourable duties imposed by China on its exports to and import from India and urged for their removal; and

(c) if so, the details thereof indicating response of Chinese authorities thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) Issues of mutual commercial and trade interest were raised and discussed during the visit of the Hon'ble Prime Minister to China from 13-15 January, 2008. The subject of non-tariff barriers, intellectual property rights and the difficulties faced by Indian agricultural products in getting access to the Chinese market was raised by the Indian side during the visit. The Chinese side took note of the issues raised by the Indian side. These issues were also raised by the Indian side in the India-China Economic, Trade and Investment summit held in Beijing on 14th January, 2008.

Free Trade Agreement with China

105. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to enter into a free trade or a similar agreement with China that would give Chinese companies access to Indian market;

(b) if so, by when that is likely to be done; and

(c) whether Government have evaluated the implications of such an agreement on India's domestic manufacturing industry and its exports; if so, the details thereof and how its adverse effects; if any, are proposed to be addressed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) to (c) In pursuance to the recommendations of the JSG a Joint Task Force to study in detail the feasibility and the benefits that may derive from an India-China RTA, was constituted. Both sides conducted separate study to find out implications of such an agreement. In its sixth meeting held on 21st and 22nd October, 2007, the JTF finalized its report. According to the report of the feasibility study an India-China RTA will be mutually advantageous. During the Prime Minister's visit to China the two Prime Ministers agreed to entrust to the two Commerce Ministers to examine the recommendations of the JTF on RTA. The Eighth Session of India-China Joint Economic Group at Ministerial level is to be held on April 1-2, 2008 in Beijing.

Slow down in Industrial Growth

106. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that industrial growth has slowed down during the last three years;